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Food and Home Notes

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Cheese served with fruit or crackers is a simple -- yet satisfying snack or dessert.

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A tray of assorted cheeses and a bowl of fresh fruits makes a dessert attractive enough for a party.

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When making cheese sauce, stir shredded into the completed white sauce and heat only enough to melt the cheese.

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When making a cheese omelet, add the shredded cheese after the omelet is cooked -- just before folding.

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Casserole dishes containing cheese should be baked at low temperatures to prevent cheese toppings from toughening during baking.

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One-half pound of cheese yields about 2 cups of shredded cheese.

ON LOOKING BACK

-- AT "AUNT SAMMY"

If you can remember baked cucumbers, wilted dandelion greens, panned kale, and corn rabbit, scalloped onions and peanuts...or even green tomato pie.. you're looking back to the Twenties or early Thirties. Menus carried such items often in those days, and people were listening to "Aunt Sammy's Housekeepers' Chats" on their radios. Aunt Sammy was created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and supposed to be the wife of "Uncle Sam". The radio program dates back to October 1926.

At that time, a compilation of these recipes was distributed as a cookbook. Now almost fifty years later, Aunt Sammy's famous old radio recipes are available once again. Slightly updated, and with some newer favorites added by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, the new version is available for \$.45 by writing for Home and Garden Bulletin Number 215 to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.



New Orleans, Louisiana
1900

A market in New Orleans around the turn of the century. Shopping carts were already in style, and obviously a favorite of the children.

BN 16934X

Holmes County, Florida
1930

Out for an afternoon ride
in the family Ox cart.

BN 44663



SWEETS 'N' SUGAR

— THRU THE YEARS

Can you imagine going to the marketplace and telling a clerk you're looking for five pounds of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen atoms, well-mixed and compounded into something edible and sweet? If the clerk is as smart as you are in remembering high school chemistry he may point to the area where you can get a bag of sugar. This approach may stump some of us -- but this ploy was written in a U.S. Department of Agriculture publication about thirty years ago.

No matter how far you explore into the genealogy of the sugar family, sugarcane appeared to the patriarch of them all, even back in U.S. Department of Agriculture records of 1939. Sugar even received recognition in the Old Testament. There is an ancient American Indian legend concerning its origin. The crusaders are credited with bringing it back with them from their travels. Today it is cultivated for its sweet juice in some areas of the world, while in other parts of the world a great industry has been built up in its name.

The sugar beet also has its own history. When Napoleon had embarked on his wars of conquest, French ports were cut-off from their tropical sources of cane sugar. Frantic French scientists probed for substitutes in apples, pears, plums, quinces, walnuts, and chestnuts. Their luck was poor until one Benjamin Delessert, following upon experiments of two Germans, investigated the beet, and from it produced crystallized sugar.

A post-World War II baby in the sugar family, dextrose is younger by far than sucrose. Sugar has been, and still is, the predominant source of sweetness in the American diets. In addition to the many conventional uses -- beverages through frozen desserts -- puddings, and frostings -- it not only provides flavor, but adds to the development of volume and texture of baked products.

SWEETS 'N' SUGAR (CON'T)

Why use sugar? Sugar contributes to the tenderness, texture and crust color in yeast breads. It influences the thickness of puddings and firmness of jellies and custards. Most of our food are affected by sugar -- one way or another. The size of crystals even makes a difference in the texture of baked products.

How do other sweeteners compare? First, other sweeteners do not carry out all the same functions as sugar. But -- they provide, to some, other uses in our diet. Honey is similar to sugar in sweetness. Molasses is slightly less sweet than sugar -- and has a bland flavor. However, high fructose corn sirup (newly developed) used by the food industry now is as sweet as sugar.

The other sweeteners -- honey and molasses -- add their own characteristic flavor, color, and aroma to food. Corn sirup and honey also add liquid to a recipe so they cannot easily be substituted for sugar in baked products, without altering the recipe. Most sugar substitutes alter the recipes for baked products and are not interchangeable.

Total sugar production for the mainland United States was 2.3 million tons (raw value) from January through July 1976, 39 percent ahead of production in corresponding months of 1975. Hawaiian sugar production for the first 36 weeks of 1976 was 712,394 tons -- down 14 percent from the five year average.

Per capita consumption of sugar for the period of 1935-67 is 96-97 pounds per person. In 1974, per capita consumption was 96.6 -- it dropped in 1975 to 90.2 lbs. per person, but has moved up to 93.8 per person this year. One of the major reasons for the consumption in 1965-75 was the taste developed by teenagers for soft drinks.

Projections for the future of sugar appear to be based somewhat on the future of soft drinks -- or the possibility that they may be replaced by low-calorie beverages.

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